

MINUTES OF
TOWN OF SEEKONK FINANCE COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
April 7, 2015

PRESENT: Robert Richardson, Chairperson
Myrna Gagnon-Elderkin
David Saad
Karen Perkins

Director of Finance: Bruce Alexander
Town Administrator Shawn Cadime
Police Chief Craig Mace
Fire Chief Michael Healy

Mr. Richardson called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

Minutes

The committee reviewed the minutes of March 10, 2015

Moved approval of minutes of March 10, 2015, Ms. Gagnon-Elderkin, second Mr. Saad (4-0)

FY 2016 Budget – Police Department

Mr. Cadime and Chief Mace presented the proposed FY 2016 budget for the police department. Salary detail was discussed, it is the goal of the Town Administrator and Police Chief to get to 38 sworn officers in FY 16. Organizational chart with the proposed officers was discussed. Mr. Cadime explained his goal for Seekonk Police, public safety has been ignored in the past, but now the philosophy has changed. FY 2016 budget calls for two additional officers. Chief emphasized need for two night detectives. Chief detailed his plans. Academy training takes 23 weeks, projected retirements will cause a “catch-up” period. Officers get hurt and sick leave kicks in, Chief projected retirements. Committee asked questions about retirement, prospective candidates, and shift change differential. Vehicle purchases and vehicle inventory was discussed. Town Administrator repeated his goal to eventually staff Seekonk PD to 40 officers.

FY 2016 Budget – Fire Department

Chief Healy presented the Fire Department budget, the Town Administrator reported his recommendation on staffing of two fire stations 24 hours a day. Chief’s goal is to control the overtime costs, Chief is requesting that the staff be 8 firefighters per group, and there are presently 7 per group. There is a need for a fire prevention officer, resulting in new revenue to the department. National standards were discussed. The Town Administrator and the Chief discussed plan for the fire department. With additional staff, revenue will increase from both inspections and EMS services. Town Administrator recommends four additional firefighters. Committee asked about new revenue from inspections. Banna Station staffing was discussed. Increase in overtime in FY 2016 is to get the department to a point where all the new firefighters have completed training. Ms. Perkins asked about the status of the Maple Avenue site. Vehicle inventory and age was discussed. Fire hydrant conditions were questioned and discussed.

Mr. Richardson asked about call volume and response time to south Seekonk. The Chief does not believe there is a need to have a fire station in south Seekonk. Response routes to south Seekonk are varied depending on the locations of the call, north Seekonk is limited to Newman Avenue. Mr. Cadime explained data report given to the Board of Selectmen.

Chief Healy’s ideal staffing would be four groups of 10 firefighters with a fire prevention officer. Mr. Alexander explained possible warrant articles that he has been working on with the Chief, one for the replacement of the 12 lead EKG machines on the EMS vehicles with 24 lead units to allow transmission of the data to the hospital. The other item would be for the purchase of “Lucas” machines for automated CPR.

There was a quick discussion about the 65/35 split. Town Administrator recommended that the County Street fire station be demolished and a garage/storage building replace it.

The committee asked where the Town Administrator is in the budget process, he wants to present everything to the Board of Selectmen and have the priorities set by the BOS in the near future, Mr. Cadime strongly believes that one time money, such as free cash, be used on one-time expenses.

Discussion took place about data driven decisions versus emotional decisions. Town and School department must provide data to the Finance Committee, Board of Selectmen and Town Administrator to support data driven decisions.

Next Meeting

Tuesday, April 28, 2015 @ 6:30 p.m., Town Hall Meeting Room

Budgets of DPW, Communications, Building Inspector and Recreation

Moved recess, Mr. Saad, second Ms. Perkins (4-0) 8:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Myrna Gagnon-Elderkin, Clerk